Dear Mr. Anderson and whomever else’s ears these words fall upon,

It feel like a lifetime ago since I last set up my sewing machine in the blackbox and talked in a Russian accent with olivia for hours on end and drove you crazy by leaving my belongings all over the space, sorry about that by the way. In a lot of ways I don’t even feel remotely like the girl I was then and I certainly don’t look like her anymore and while all that sounds a little solemn, I promise growths are occurring, slowly yet surly, that are rooted in genuine happiness.

So, lets get rolling with this life update, shall we?. I’ve been in college now for a little over two months and my classes are as follows:

* Art History
* Theatre History
* Intro to Design
* Elements of Design
* Costume Construction

In addition to this I am taking Theatre Practices. Theatre Practices is six weeks of 6 hours in the costume shop, then the scene shop, lighting shop, and finally a show assignment. I also don’t have to take any general education classes or liberal arts classes for my entire college career, as I completed all 30 of those credits from my AP Testing in high school, guess the stress finally paid off right?

Now, i’ll tell you a little bit about my program. Mason Gross is a BFA Conservatory program. On my second day of college I sat through a two hour long meeting that ended in with my entire first year company and I signing a 20+ page contract stating things like “Two C’s in any of your classes is automatic dismissal from the program” and “One unexcused absence is automatic artistic probation” which to a lot of kids was all very daunting, however, this is exactly the type or program I wanted to be apart of all. Being held to such a high standard means that I’m only working with people who are truly passionate and want to be here and that makes the work we do here that much better. Additionally, my professors are amazing. All of them are working professionals, many of them with broadway credits and tony awards. They have so much experience and so much knowledge to share and every single day I learn something new. I being pushed, artistically, harder than I ever have before and I love it.

Now I won’t lie, things have been hard. I was the only first year design student to be assigned to a show during the first semester in ADDITION to my ten hours in the costume shop. This meant that for my first month I was starting my day at 7am and going nonstop until 1am when rehearsals ended and as if that wasn’t a lot, Saturdays and Sundays were no exceptions as I had rehearsal from 10am until midnight. On top of this, a lot of other things were going on in my life and the end of the show left me feeling more emotionally drained than I had in a very long time. So, I did what I always do when I’m feeling lost, I throw myself into my work, into my art and, this time it really paid off.

And with that, we get to the real reason I wanted to write this. Two really great things have happened, for starters, I am now a double major. A few weeks ago I was pulled aside and told that I was more than qualified to double major in costume design and costume technology and that should I choose to do so, they wanted to put me in some upperclassmen construction classes this spring. The decision was easy. Running the costume shop back home taught me a lot of things and one of those was how much I loved that aspect of theatre, doing both, majoring in both, not only makes me happy because I’m doing ALL the things I really love, but after graduation it will only open more doors for me and make me a stronger designer in the long run.

The second and most exciting thing is yesterday I was given my first contract. My contract is a assistant costume design contract for our spring Shakespeare show Measure for Measure. There are many very cool things about this. For one, first years are almost never given contracts and as you know, I’ve always struggled with being confident in my work and for the first time I am starting to believe in myself and my art and it’s a wonderful feeling. I know that I still have so much to learn and so much room to grow as an artist and while I will always be very hard on myself, sometimes to a fault, this was a boost I really needed right now.

The next very cool thing about this is that the costume designer I am assisting is none other than one Miss Meredith Prouty-Duey. Dith is currently studying abroad at the Shakespeare Globe in London (something I get to do in two years!) and we’ve been talking non-stop since I got my contract about this. We are so excited to be able to work on this show together and more than anything we know that we are going to put fourth the very best work possible and truly show everyone what EOTSP alums can do.

Now, as this letter is getting quite wordy, I will begin to wrap it up. First, I owe you the biggest thank you in the world. For whatever reason, you believed in me, you believed in me and you gave me a space to develop my artistic voice and learn and truly lay down the foundation of what can only be described as the greatest love of my life. I know that sounds dramatic but, that’s what it is to me. I am so in love with what I’m going to school for, with what I’m going to spend my life doing. It’s the reason I work so hard and get out of bed everyday, it’s my livelihood and by believing in me you allowed my to find the thing I’m most passionate about, the thing that drives me and for that I am most thankful.

Over the last two weeks I have finally started to feel like I am becoming a person I really want to be. I believe that my career as a costume designer is going to take me many many places and while I feel I’m already a different person after just five months, no matter how much I change, how much time passes, or what I do, I’m always going to carry a little part of EOTS with me. It gave me so much and it means so much to me.

I hope all is well for you.

All the best,

Kenzy Zachry

P.S. (Here is a little blurb for the current kids in EOTSP should you read this to them) What you put into this company it will give back to you. EOTS has so many amazing opportunities and so many things to teach you and no matter what you do after high school, whether you major in theatre or not, you will learn skills here that will help you in every aspect of your life no matter where you go or what you do. You are all sitting right now in a truly special and unique place and if you work hard you will create something in your time here that you will be proud of for many many years following or, at the very least, some great memories.

Good luck with Curious Incident, I don’t have to be there to know that its going to be something really spectacular. Finish the last two weeks strong and take pride in the art you are creating. It means something.